

STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Study Assignment

The State-Tribal Relations Study Committee selected its study topics for the 2004 Interim at its first meeting. The committee decided to address the issues related to the placement of land acquired by tribes into trust; health issues, particularly in the area of diabetes; issues related to South Dakota's voter identification law, and updates and testimony on child placement issues and corrections issues. The committee decided to hold at least one meeting on one of South Dakota's Indian reservations.

Summary of Interim

The State-Tribal Relations Study Committee is an ongoing interim committee that was created in statute (SDCL 2-6-20) in 1993 as a part of the state's reconciliation efforts. The committee, which generally does not propose legislation, provides a forum within state government for discussion by Indians and non-Indians of issues affecting the Native American community. The committee also serves as a way of familiarizing legislators with such issues.

The first meeting was held in the Capitol in Pierre on July 15, 2004, with the primary task of selecting study topics for the 2004 Interim. Unlike other interim committees, which are temporary and are established to study specific issues, the State-Tribal Relations Committee is ongoing and selects its own study topics at the beginning of the interim. Committee members, who are appointed for two-year terms, also select their own chair and vice chair. Representative Stanford Adelstein, Chair, and Senator Michael LaPointe, Vice Chair, were selected in 2003 and continued in those positions for the 2004 Interim. As noted above, the committee at the first meeting chose to study the transfer of land into trust, health and diabetes, and the voter identification law for the 2004 Interim. The committee also heard informational presentations by Mr. Roger Campbell, the Commissioner of the South Dakota Office of Tribal Government Relations; by Secretary of State Chris Nelson and former State Senator Thomas Shortbull, currently an advisor to the Federal Election Assistance Commission, on voter identification issues; by Doug Hofer of the Department of Game, Fish and Parks and Mr. Sonny Richards of the Lakota Sioux/Bear Butte Forum on issues related to the use and status of Bear Butte; and by Mr. Charlie Abourezk on the possibility of receiving medical assistance on South Dakota Indian reservations from groups in Italy.

At the second meeting, which was held on September 21, 2004, at the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Council Chambers in Rosebud, the committee heard a presentation by Mr. Steve Emery, Tribal Attorney for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, on the acquisition of lands by tribes to be placed in trust. He also discussed the current status of the lawsuit between the State of South Dakota and the U.S. Department of Interior regarding the acquisition of land by the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe near Oacoma. The committee also heard public testimony on a variety of issues.

The committee's third meeting was held on December 6, 2004, in the Capitol in Pierre. Tribal Chairman Michael Jandreau of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe and Mr. Eric Greenberg of Innovative Investments, San Francisco, California, discussed proposals and issues related to the development of wind energy on the Lower Brule Reservation and other areas of South Dakota. Chairman Jandreau and Mayor Dennis Eismach of Pierre discussed problems and issues created by the proposed expansion of the DME Railroad and negotiations between the

tribe and the city regarding a proposed railroad bypass around the city of Pierre, which would involve tribal lands. Secretary of State Chris Nelson discussed the 2004 elections and reported on how South Dakota's voter identification law was implemented. He noted that elections went smoothly and better than during the June primary elections and special House race. The committee rejected a proposed bill that would have revised the voter identification law to allow a person who is personally recognized by election officials but has no photo identification to vote. Dr. Jeffrey Henderson of the Black Hills Center for American Indian Health discussed Native American health issues and his organization's research activities, especially in the area of diabetes. The committee approved a resolution endorsing proposed medical assistance related to diabetes on Indian reservations from the Regional Government of Tuscany, Italy, and a possible cultural exchange program. The committee heard public testimony.

Listing of Legislation Adopted

None.

Summary of Meeting Dates & Places and Listing of Committee Members

The committee met in the State Capitol in Pierre on July 15, on the Rosebud Reservation on September 21, and again in the Capitol in Pierre on December 6, 2004.

Members of the committee included Representative. Stanford Adelstein (Chair) and Senator Michael LaPointe (Vice Chair); Senators Patricia de Hueck, Brock Greenfield, Gil Koetzle, and Sam Nachtigal; and Representatives Jim Bradford, Kent Juhnke, J.E. "Jim" Putnam, and Thomas Van Norman.

Committee staff members were Tom Magedanz, Principal Research Analyst; and Teri Retrum, Senior Legislative Secretary.